

# ***Report of activities 2001***

*Inter-Country Team  
for West and Central Africa*



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

## **UNAIDS**

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***Report of activities***  
***2001***

***Inter-Country Team***  
***for West and Central Africa***





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# Abbreviations and acronyms

■ <b>ACERAC</b>	Association of Bishops' Conferences of the Central African Region / Association des Conférences Episcopales de la Région de l'Afrique Centrale
■ <b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
■ <b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
■ <b>AIO</b>	African Insurance Organisation
■ <b>AMICAALL</b>	African Mayors Initiatives for Community Action on AIDS at Local Level
■ <b>ARV</b>	Antiretrovirals
■ <b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
■ <b>CERPOD</b>	Centre for Studies and Research on Population for Development / Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Population pour le Développement
■ <b>CICHD</b>	Centre for International Cooperation in Health and Development
■ <b>CIDA</b>	Canadian International Development Agency
■ <b>CP</b>	Clandestine Prostitutes
■ <b>DAC</b>	Divisional AIDS Committee
■ <b>DR Congo</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
■ <b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
■ <b>FANAF</b>	Fédération des Sociétés d'Assurance de Droit National Africaines
■ <b>FHI</b>	Family Health International
■ <b>GTZ</b>	German Technical Cooperation Agency
■ <b>GRIA</b>	Inter-Agency Workgroup / Groupe de Travail Inter-Agence
■ <b>HARRP</b>	HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Project
■ <b>HIPC</b>	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
■ <b>HIV</b>	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
■ <b>IAWG</b>	Inter-Agency Working Group
■ <b>ICASA</b>	International Conference on AIDS and STDs in Africa
■ <b>ICT/WCA</b>	Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa
■ <b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
■ <b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
■ <b>IPAA</b>	International Partnership against AIDS in Africa
■ <b>LCBC</b>	Lake Chad Basin Commission
■ <b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
■ <b>MAP</b>	Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Programme
■ <b>MTC</b>	Mother-to-Child Transmission
■ <b>NAC</b>	National AIDS Commission
■ <b>NACP</b>	National AIDS Control Programme
■ <b>NAP+</b>	Network of African People Living with HIV
■ <b>NAS</b>	National AIDS Secretariat



■ <b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
■ <b>PAF</b>	Programme Accelerated Fund
■ <b>PANA</b>	Pan-African News Agency
■ <b>PDI</b>	Pan-African Development Institute
■ <b>PLWHA</b>	People Living with HIV/AIDS
■ <b>PMTCT</b>	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
■ <b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
■ <b>PSI</b>	Population Service International
■ <b>SAFCO</b>	AIDS in West and Central Africa / SIDA en Afrique du Centre et de l'Ouest
■ <b>SHARP</b>	Sierra Leone HIV/AIDS Response Project
■ <b>SPP</b>	Strategic Planning Process
■ <b>STI</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infections
■ <b>SWAA</b>	Society of Women against AIDS in Africa
■ <b>TWG</b>	Transitional Working Group
■ <b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
■ <b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
■ <b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
■ <b>UNGASS</b>	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS
■ <b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
■ <b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
■ <b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
■ <b>US</b>	United States of America
■ <b>VCT</b>	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
■ <b>WAHO</b>	West African Health Organization
■ <b>WAEMU</b>	West African Economic and Monetary Union
■ <b>WARDA</b>	West African Rice Development Association
■ <b>WCA</b>	West and Central Africa
■ <b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization





# Foreword

*"...time is not on our side, a more urgent and rigorous response is vital..."*

*Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS*

The *"realignment"* of the UNAIDS Secretariat in October 2001 refocused the missions of the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa (ICT/WCA):

- to intensify and scale-up sustainable national responses by providing strategic support to operations of the United Nations system and its partners at the national and sub-regional levels;
- to put into synergy and intensify inter-country activities through existing initiatives and networks;
- to stimulate and facilitate exchange and collaboration mechanisms.

The *"realignment"* also opted for the decentralization to the Inter-Country Team of the monitoring of twelve West and Central African countries that have no Country Programme Advisers (Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe and Sierra Leone).

In this context, the Inter-Country Team focussed its action for the year 2001 on implementation of the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa in the following priority areas:

- Strategic planning and development of local responses;
- Strengthening of the technical capacities of national actors and sub-regional partners in the setting up of HIV/AIDS activities among the youth, sex workers and mobile and displaced populations, and refugees;
- Technical support for care and treatment of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), prevention of HIV/AIDS mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programmes, access to care and treatment in the context of respect and protection of human rights;
- Addressing emerging areas : strategy for reducing poverty and the spread of HIV/AIDS, and response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in emergency, conflict and post-conflict situations.

The implementation of each priority area was based on four main strategies:

- Intensification of direct country assistance, particularly to the 12 decentralized countries;
- Development and strengthening of inter-country initiatives;
- Management of technical resources networks for country support and strategic reflection on sub-regional priority themes;
- Facilitation of exchange of information and experiences, and promotion of sub-regional best practices.

In the pursuit and reinforcement of activities carried out during the year 2000, the Inter-Country Team increased its support to all the countries in the sub-region to enable them to implement adapted, efficient and sustainable responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The reinforcement of coordination within the United Nations system, cooperation with the different partners, exchanges between the countries and the actors, mobilization of the actors and national policy makers and support to the Theme Groups through the collaboration mechanisms adopted in May 2000 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, helped to strengthen the specificity of the actions and sharing of a common vision of the fight against AIDS in West and Central Africa.

The Inter-Country Team continued to strengthening its role as *"broker"* and facilitator of the sub-regional response within the United Nations system and of its partners aimed at supporting country responses to the epidemic.



## ■ *Support for scaling-up national responses*

### ***Strengthening of national responses through inter-country initiatives for reducing vulnerability and risks associated with HIV/AIDS in the context of population mobility***

The Inter-Country Team, with the support of the World Bank, has since 1996 concentrated its efforts on issues related to population mobility in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In this respect, it supports the development of technical resources networks and research-actions; it manages an electronic network for exchange of information and discussions; it also supports interventions on areas, routes and sites where populations interact with each other with a view to reducing incidents of HIV/AIDS among the populations concerned, and thereby reduce the effects of the epidemic.

Development of partnerships between governments, implementing agencies, NGOs and all the actors concerned, such as transport unions, was retained as an essential strategy for reducing risks and vulnerability associated with HIV/AIDS among mobile, migrant and displaced populations.

### ***Joint sub-regional programme for reducing risks and vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS along the Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor***

#### **General objective**

Reduction of risks and vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility along the Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor.

#### **Strategies and partnerships**

- **Reinforcement** of sub-regional cooperation against AIDS in the framework of the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa (IPAA) and the West African Initiative;
- **Funding:** a grant from the World Bank of US \$ 15 000 000 over a period of three years under MAP II;
- **Main partners:** USAID and its projects (PSI, FHI, SFPS), Care International, SIDA III Project (Canada), GTZ, etc...



Since July 2000, the Abidjan-Lagos corridor linking 5 coastal countries, namely Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria constitutes one of the priority areas of work for the Inter-Country Team.

A consultation meeting between the main actors was held in Accra, Ghana, to assess the situation and share experiences. During this meeting, the actors expressed their common desire to pursue the reflection with a view to implementing a concerted plan among the different countries.

It is in view of the magnitude of the problem and the need to provide a large-scale response that the World Bank decided to support the efforts of the Inter-Country Team in the implementation of a sub-regional HIV/AIDS control project along the Abidjan-Lagos corridor linking the five countries.

### *Analysis of the situation and response along the Abidjan-Lagos corridor*

The situation and response analysis was conducted in June 2001 with a view to ensuring better understanding of the problems and facilitating the development of an adapted project against HIV/AIDS along the migration corridor linking the five countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria, focusing particularly at the eight border sites of Noe, Elubo, Aflao, Kojoviakope, Sanvee Condji, Hilla Condji, Krake and Seme as well as in the capital towns (Abidjan, Accra, Lome, Cotonu and Lagos).

The results of the situation analysis showed that the human and economic space of these coastal countries represent a significant weight in the sub-region. The migrant population groups include mainly truck drivers, male and female (more numerous) traders, as well as children and young girls who are victims of trafficking. The population of these five coastal countries is estimated at a little fewer than 200 million inhabitants, to which must be added a significant number of nationals from the ECOWAS countries, the majority of whom migrate to Côte d'Ivoire (87%) and Nigeria (50%).



*Elubo market (at the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana)*

Important risk factors for the spread of HIV/AIDS were identified in several towns or cross-border geographical areas such as Kojoviakope (Togo) and Aflao (Ghana). More than twelve prostitution sites were identified along the corridor. Traditional practices (such as female genital mutilation) among ethnic groups living on both sides of the borders constitute additional factors of risk and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS that contribute to the spread of the epidemic.

## Programme planning workshop

This workshop was held in Cotonou, Benin, from 30 July - 02 August 2001 and brought together 130 participants, including political officials from the five countries concerned, development partners involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS (Africare, Care International, GTZ, SFPS/USAID, CERPOD, ActionAid), the World Bank and the Technical Resources Network on AIDS and migration.

The main objective of the workshop was *"to obtain a consensus around the programme on reduction of HIV/AIDS transmission along the corridor and create a conducive environment for supporting actions in the five (5) target countries"*.

## Main outcomes

- Consensus on the interest and relevance of the Corridor Project;
- Convergence of views on the importance of sub-regional collaboration in support of efforts by national AIDS control programmes;
- Desire to increase the areas of intervention of the project as well as the geographical coverage and populations targeted by the Corridor Project;
- Adoption of a draft institutional framework;
- Creation of a Transitional Working Group (TWG) as the provisional steering committee to analyse all the institutional framework proposals and take a final decision;
- Declaration of approval and support of the project by the Ministers of Health of Togo and Benin and representatives of the Governments of Nigeria, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire;
- Declaration of commitment and support for the Corridor Project by development partners.

## Transitional Working Group (TWG)

The TWG met on 9-10 October in Cotonu, Benin, in the presence of representatives of the World Bank, the French Government, USAID, CARE International and PSI.

The following were the main decisions taken by the meeting and which were endorsed by the representatives of the five countries:

- The Republic of Benin would be the recipient of the World Bank grant;
- The Steering Body that should ensure the supervision, monitoring of the preparation and implementation of the project would be composed of coordinators of national HIV/AIDS control programmes of the five countries;
- The Executive Secretariat in charge of the management and day-to-day implementation of this project would be based in Benin. The staff of the Executive Secretariat would be composed of highly qualified members and recruited from the five countries of the corridor on competitive basis. The official in charge of the Executive Secretariat would be chosen from among candidates from Côte d'Ivoire;
- A multi-national Advisory Council would be set up to advise the Management Body on issues related to the concerns of the partners.

## ***Initiative of riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari (CAR, Chad, Congo and DR Congo): Reduction of risks and vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility and post-conflict situations***

### **General objective**

Reduction of the risks and vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility within the riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari, taking into account conflict and post-conflict situations in CAR, Chad, Congo, and DR Congo.

### **Strategies and partnerships**

- Reinforcement of sub-regional cooperation against AIDS in the framework of the IPAA;
- Main partners: GTZ, UNHCR, Médecins Sans Frontières, UN Peace Keeping Force in DR Congo, Médecins du Monde, French Development Agency;
- Funding: a grant of nearly US\$ 5 000 000 from the African Development Bank (AfDB);
- Approval and signing of the institutional implementation framework on 8 June 2001 in Brazzaville Congo by the Ministers of Health and Ministers of Transport of the 4 countries;
- Presentation of the conclusions of the meeting to the President of Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, by the Ministers of Health and Transport and the UNAIDS delegation on 8 June 2001.



The situation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the five riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari (CAR, Chad, Congo and DR Congo) is one of the most alarming, as revealed by recent data on HIV/AIDS infection (sources: NACP and UNAIDS):

- The average HIV prevalence rate in the four countries of the initiative is 7% among the sexually active population. This prevalence ranges from 3% in Chad to 14% in the Central African Republic. On the whole, 1 000 000 children and adults are living with HIV.



### *Situation and response analysis*

An analysis of the situation and response in the context of mobility conducted in November and December 2000 confirmed the determinants of the epidemic in the four countries and in the migration river corridors, namely:

- The economic and social crisis, coupled with violence, wars and social conflicts as well as population mobility;
- Population mobility on both sides of the Congo-Ubangui River, estimated at 9 000 persons per month. Boats and fast canoes move between Brazzaville and Kinshasa (the two closest State capitals in the world) on a daily basis, and nearly 3 000 persons per day pass through the two "beaches" (Brazzaville and Kinshasa), representing officially close to 1 000 000 travellers per year.

The population groups concerned are traders and adventurers of several nationalities: Cameroonians, Central Africans, Congolese and Chadians. More than 438 705 refugees and displaced persons along Rivers Congo and Ubangui are also in a situation of extreme vulnerability.

The objective of this inter-country programme is to reduce the vulnerability, risks and impact of STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility and post-conflict situations in the riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari.

This sub-regional response consists in:

- promoting and organizing inter-country cooperation in the fight against STI/HIV/AIDS;
- launching on the boats along the river route information, education and communication actions, and behaviour change interventions;
- putting in place a community-based mechanism for the distribution and/or social marketing of condoms in the ports, along the river, and on the boats;
- providing services for care and treatment of STIs and opportunistic infections;
- strengthening the capacities of mobile populations and people interacting with them for developing the local response;
- promoting voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) of HIV/AIDS as well as care and support of people infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS;
- putting in place a communication network among countries of the Initiative.

### *Restitution and planning workshop*

The Restitution and planning workshop for national actors, policy makers and partners, held in Brazzaville from 5-7 June 2001, resulted in the development of a plan of action for 2001-2003.

### *Meeting of Ministers of Health and Transport of countries of the Initiative*

The Ministers of Health and Transport of countries of the Initiative met on 8 June 2001 in Brazzaville, Congo, to adopt the 2001-2003 plan of action of the Initiative and the institutional framework for its implementation.

### *Initiative of the Executive Director of UNAIDS and Ministers of Health and Transport*

On 28 August 2001, the Executive Director of UNAIDS and Ministers of Health and Transport of the 4 countries launched the Initiative by casting off the moorings of a boat that sailed through localities along River Congo over a distance of nearly 120 kilometres on an exploratory mission. The mission provided medical assistance to the population, conducted sensitization activities on HIV/AIDS, analysed the environment of the response and produced an audio-visual documentation for advocacy.

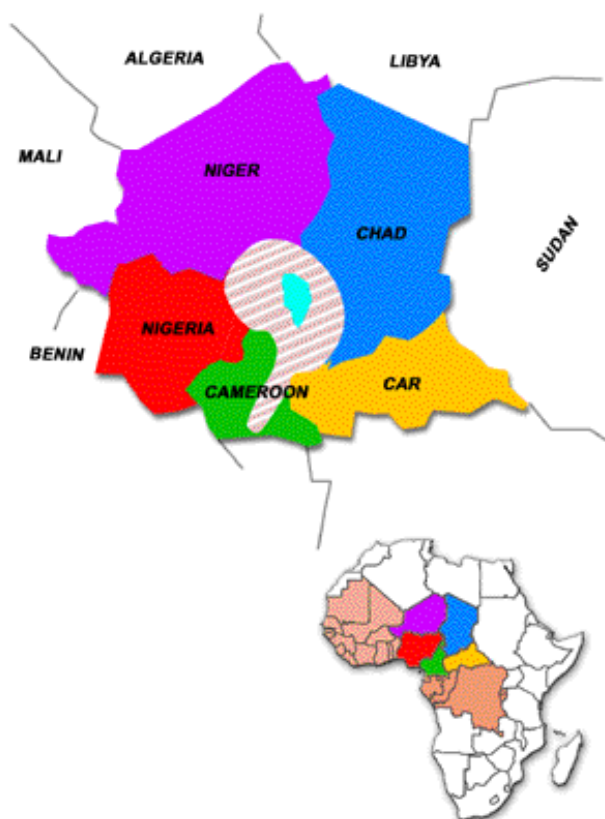
### ***Initiative of countries of the Lake Chad Basin on STI/HIV/AIDS (CAR, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria): sub-regional programme for reducing risks and vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility***

#### **General objective**

Reduction of vulnerability and risks associated with STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility.

#### **Strategies and partnerships**

- Strengthening of sub-regional cooperation in the framework of IPAA;
- Integration of the Initiative, including the Executive Secretariat, into the institutional framework of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), a sub-regional political and economic entity;
- Development of the 2001-2005 Plan of Action;
- Funding: an estimated amount of US \$ 10 059 524 required for 2001-2005;
- Main partners: USAID and its projects (PSI, FHI, SFPS), Care International, NGOs;
- Potential funding partner: Oil exploitation Consortium in Chad - Cameroon;
- Approval and signing on 12 April 2001 of the institutional framework by the Ministers of Health of CAR, Chad, Cameroon and Niger and the Commissioner for Health of Borno State of Nigeria;
- Presentation by the Ministers of Health and the UNAIDS delegation of the conclusions of the meeting to the President of Chad, Idriss Deby on 13 April 2001.



This Initiative integrates the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) created on 22 May 1964 by Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria for managing water resources in the area known as "*Lake Chad Conventional Basin*" covering an area of 427 000 km<sup>2</sup>.



The CAR rejoined the sub-regional organization in 1994. The new Conventional Basin covers now an area of 966 955 km<sup>2</sup>.

In the Lake Chad Basin countries, the rate of sero-prevalence has been on constant increase, although it varies from one country to the other. It ranges between 5% and 14% among adults.

Several socio-cultural, political and economic determinants account for such a situation: poverty, inefficiency of the health systems that can no longer provide care, particularly for STIs, gender inequalities, traditional sexual practices like "*dry sex*", socio-political and military conflicts, intense population mobility and migratory movements for economic reasons or due to conflicts. These different factors increase the vulnerability of the people and risks of transmission of STI/HIV/AIDS in a sub-region with a population of about 145 million inhabitants.

The Initiative of Lake Chad Basin countries will facilitate the establishment of mechanisms for consultation, collaboration and harmonization of inter-country interventions for a sub-regional and enhanced response to the epidemic.

### *Analysis of the situation and response to STI/HIV/AIDS*

An analysis of the situation and response to STI/HIV/AIDS in a context of mobility/migration in the five countries of the Lake Chad Basin was conducted from July 2000 to March 2001.

### *Sub-Regional Restitution and Planning Workshop*

The Sub-Regional Restitution and Planning Workshop, held from 9-10 April 2001, helped to develop the Plan of Action 2001-2005.

### *Ministerial Meeting*

The Ministerial Meeting held on 11 April 2001 adopted the plan of action and institutional framework of the Initiative. A declaration called Douguia Declaration was adopted by the Ministers concerned in the four countries and the Borno State of Nigeria.

*The Government of Chad put at the disposal of the Initiative a Coordinator who assumed duty in September 2001, while the Lake Chad Basin Commission offered offices to the Executive Secretariat of the Initiative.*

## ***Initiative of the Mano River Union on HIV/AIDS***

Since 1990, permanent conflicts within the Mano River Basin has spread across borders and plunged the region into several humanitarian crisis. The brutal civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1990s led to the exodus of more than one million refugees to Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea over the past decade. In addition to refugees, an estimated of one to two million people within the sub-region were internally displaced at the height of various conflicts.

Although prospects for stability and economic recovery are improving gradually in the entire sub-region, it is estimated that out of a population of about 15 million inhabitants, more than 3 million are currently without resources, including more than 1.1 million displaced people or refugees. It is well known that poverty and population mobility accelerate the spread of HIV/AIDS, particularly among women and children, who generally constitute the majority of poor and displaced populations. Besides, the communities that have received and continue to receive these displaced persons are also exposed to a high risk of infection.



After the two sub-regional meetings<sup>1</sup> in 1998 and 1999 involving the three countries of the Mano River Union (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea), the consultation process was relaunched by the Inter-Country Team through a video-conference held on 12 October 2001 with international partners, namely UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Bank. The objective was to brainstorm on the most efficient and effective approach for putting in place a joint sub-regional initiative for reducing vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS of displaced populations (refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons), host communities, women and children affected by the war, soldiers and peacekeeping forces.

The video-conference concluded on the urgent need to put in place a coordinated initiative at the sub-regional level in order to reduce social vulnerability and individual risk associated with STI/HIV/AIDS among refugees, returning populations, displaced persons and host communities, with particular emphasis on women and children affected by the war. Furthermore, it was agreed that every sub-regional initiative should necessarily aim at completing and supporting national programmes targeted at the populations concerned.

<sup>1</sup> These two meetings, one in Conakry and the other in Abidjan, resulted in the development and adoption of an inter-country project between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea for a joint sub-regional initiative for the prevention and control of STI/HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately, this initiative was shelved when fighting resumed in 1999 and 2000.

## 2

***Strategic planning of the national response***

The majority of countries in West and Central Africa have developed a strategic framework for HIV/AIDS and finalized the strategic plans. These are necessary tools for implementing a coordinated and multilateral national response to the epidemic as well as facilitating the mobilization of the necessary resources.

This essential support for countries in the sub-region was provided by the Inter-Country Team, thanks to the establishment of a technical resources network whose Executive Secretariat is based at the Pan-African Development Institute (PDI) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

In collaboration with the Regional Technical Support Team of UNFPA, based in Dakar, Senegal, the workshop on demographic projections for the 12 countries of the sub-region, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 9-19 November 2001, helped to integrate the demographic hypotheses into the strategic planning process and advocacy for policy-makers, actors and partners.

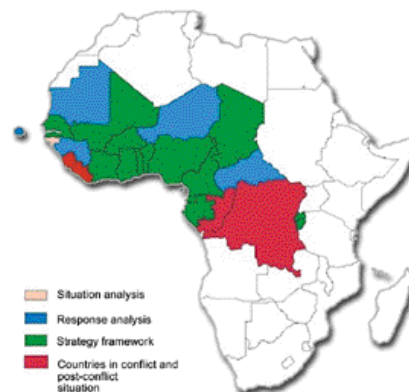
These different strategic planning processes enabled the Inter-Country Team to learn the following lessons on which it would base its country support in 2002:

- Strengthening of the sectoral operational planning to facilitate the scaling-up of the response;
- Budget estimation of the plans in order to better organize the mobilization of resources, identify the weaknesses and facilitate the financial management of the actions;
- Better description of the institutional frameworks put in place, particularly to ensure efficient coordination of the response;
- Addressing specific socio-political (conflict and post-conflict) situations and adaptation of the strategic approach.

***“Learning through action”***

In developing the strategic plans, the Inter-Country Team and national teams learnt through action and drew the following lessons that lead to an enhanced and efficient response:

- Capacity building at regional and national level;
- Advocacy for increasing State budgets with a view to pursuing the process of developing and implementing the sectoral plans;
- Quick passage from the strategic planning stage to implementation of the operational plans;
- Development of tools for advocacy, particularly the models of demographic projection on HIV/AIDS;
- Creation of a database on national and sub-regional expertise;
- Definition of strategies for resource mobilization and seizure of existing opportunities;

***Strategic planning process  
West and Central Africa  
December 2001***

- Strengthening of exchange of information and experiences among countries;
- Strengthening of national ownership of the integration of HIV/AIDS into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), poverty alleviation agreements and development projects and programmes.

### ***“Learning from others”***

The lessons learnt were in conformity with the results of a series of video-conferences, where the discussions were focussed on:

1. how to move from the strategic framework to the operationalization (implementation) and multisectorality (strategy, difficulties and constraints);
2. resource mobilization and management mechanisms.

These video-conferences, organized by the Inter-Country Team with the participation of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Conakry, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Togo helped to:

- exchange experiences among the different countries involved in the strategic planning process;
- strengthen the capacities of national teams through learning and ownership of the process by the national teams constituted by members of the Theme Group, partners, actors and national decision-makers.



### ***Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS into programmes, development projects, poverty reduction strategies, and mobilization of the necessary resources for an enhanced and efficient response***

The impact of AIDS constitutes an urgent priority today, since HIV/AIDS impedes the attainment of other development objectives, including economic growth and political stability in Africa.

An international process for alleviating the debt burden of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) was launched in several countries of the continent. This initiative integrates the new strategies of the IMF/World Bank.

In this context, UNAIDS supported and initiated the process of increasing budgets for AIDS through debt relief for implementing efficient and multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS.

The establishment of a working group in the countries and a sub-regional technical network for the conception and implementation of the *"Debt relief for HIV/AIDS"* component of the HIPC Initiative helped to achieve, in close collaboration with the countries, co-sponsor agencies, bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation, the civil society, etc., the strengthening of the capacities of national experts. It also highlighted the links between poverty and HIV/AIDS in order to facilitate the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS into the PRSP in the countries.

### ***Initiative of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)***

This initiative enabled the Inter-Country Team to support the mobilization of additional national resources for the period 2001-2005 through the following actions:

- Strengthening the capacities of technical resources of twelve countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Conakry, Mali, Madagascar, Mauritania, Rwanda, Togo) during the sub-regional workshop on *"AIDS, debt alleviation, AIDS control and poverty reduction"* held from 2-4 April 2001 in Cotonou, Benin;
- Creation, in July 2001, of technical resources networks at sub-regional and country levels for enhancing budget preparation and assessment of AIDS control expenses;
- Extension of the expertise to the Focal Points of co-sponsor agencies and other partners for cost assessment and preparation of programme budgets;
- Documentation in October 2001 of a case study on Cameroon's experience of debt relief for poverty reduction and AIDS control;
- Review of HIV/AIDS expenditures in Cameroon from 1995-2001.

#### ***Additional resources mobilized through the HIPC Initiative in 6 countries***

<b>Country</b>	<b>Budget (US dollars)</b>	<b>Period</b>
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	<b>7 000 000</b>	<b>2001-2005</b>
<b>Cameroon</b>	<b>2 432 000</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>
<b>Chad</b>	<b>600 000</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Guinea-Conakry</b>	<b>800 000</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Madagascar</b>	<b>2 000 000</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>
<b>Mauritania</b>	<b>6 318 000</b>	<b>2001- 2003</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 150 000</b>	



### ***Care and support for vulnerable populations: sex workers***

#### ***Technical consultations with peer educators for sex workers***

Three technical consultations on sex work were organized in 2001 with 16 sex workers from seven West African countries : Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. These informal consultations - designed as modified focus group discussions - were organized in the following three cities: Bassam (Côte d'Ivoire), Accra (Ghana) and Lagos (Nigeria). During these discussions, the women were consulted as experts on the milieu in which they lived and worked. An unexpected finding was that sexually transmitted infections (STI) were not the primary concern of these vulnerable women.

Instead, they were preoccupied with and visibly traumatized by social stigma and physical and emotional violence in their daily lives. Earning enough money to feed, clothe and educate their children - and in some cases to keep their own daughters out of sex work - had become an obsession for most of these women. What they wanted more than improved access to STI services (which was UNAIDS' objective in organizing these discussions) was technical and financial assistance for the creation of associations of vulnerable women through which training in various income generating activities could be provided to help these women eventually quit sex work.



### ***Workshop on the prevention and care of STI among vulnerable populations within the context of sex work in West Africa***

The "voices" of these vulnerable women were synthesized and presented at the joint WHO/UNAIDS/CICHD *"Workshop on the prevention and care of STI among vulnerable populations within the context of sex work in West Africa"*. This five-day sub-regional workshop was held in Banjul, The Gambia, from 24-28 September 2001.

The overall goal of the Banjul workshop was to contribute to a strengthening of STI prevention and care programs targeting groups experiencing high risk sexual behavior within the context of sex work. The workshop's three specific objectives included:

- to bring participants' knowledge up-to-date regarding the major factors or determinants encouraging the further spread of STI and HIV within sex worker environments;
- to identify, in light of partner and country experiences, the most appropriate operational responses regarding the prevention and care of STI within the context of sex work;
- to agree on the different steps required to reinforce and scale-up interventions for the prevention and care of STI services within the context of sex work.

Fifty participants from 12 West African countries participated in the Banjul workshop; of these, eight were sex workers. A major recommendation of this sub-regional workshop was a call for greater implication of sex workers in all phases of STI interventions for which they are the primary beneficiaries. This implies commitment by governments, NGOs and international partners to:

- consult regularly with sex workers during the design and conception phases of STI interventions to assure "ownership";
- hire sex workers for mapping exercises and situation analyses;
- train sex workers for data collection/analysis and counseling/peer education;
- recruit sex workers for such positions as receptionist and counselors at STI clinics;



It was understood that sex workers are an intimately knowledgeable about the environments in which they live and work, and should therefore be consulted as "*experts*" capable of helping programme planners identify the major obstacles to and opportunities for improving access to reproductive health services targeting vulnerable populations within sex worker environments.

Another important outcome of the Banjul workshop was the adoption of the draft working document "*Next Steps*" as a guide for countries to reinforce and scale-up STI interventions within the context of sex work. This guide will be finalized, translated and distributed by ICT/WCA in 2002. Its recommendations include:

- Promoting situation analysis for improving sub-regional understanding of the socio-cultural and economic determinants underlying the trend of increasingly younger women becoming involved in sex work ("*le rajeunissement de la prostitution*"), and the clandestine nature of these young women's work which makes it difficult to target STI prevention and care services to them;
- Promotion of the female condom, accompanied by improved quality and quantity of IEC messages and materials on reproductive health and anatomy;
- Recognizing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence as a key determinant underlying the spread of STI/HIV/AIDS;
- Improving the quality of STI prevention and care services, including the adaption of the WHO syndromic management flow charts to sex worker environments;
- Creation of a sub-regional technical resource network of institutions working with and associations of women economically and sexually vulnerable.

### ***Situation analysis***

As a follow-up to the "*Capacity building workshop on situation analysis of sex work in West and Central Africa*" held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in April 2000, the Inter-Country Team facilitated four major activities related to situation analysis in 2001:

- Organized a round-table discussion of country experiences with situation analysis at the Banjul workshop. The four country presentations included Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal;
- Supported a nationwide situation analysis of sex work in Tchad by sending technical assistance for a two-week training of the national research team, which included 12 sex workers;
- Published the provisional report "*Yérélon Initiative: Understanding and Reaching Clandestine Sex Workers in Bobo Dioulasso within the context of the AIDS Epidemic*", a community-based project born out of a three-year situation analysis of sex work in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, by Centre Muraz;
- Conducted a rapid mid-term evaluation of Ghana's situation analysis of mobile sex workers.

In Ghana, the Inter-Country Team identified and mobilized resources for an innovative local response to HIV/AIDS. In the rural district of Manya Krobo in southeastern Ghana, a group of Queen Mothers or traditional leaders requested assistance from UNAIDS to break the vicious circle of poverty, migration, sex work and AIDS. After having attended too many funerals of young women who had returned to their villages to die of AIDS, these Queen Mothers decided to offer economic alternatives to

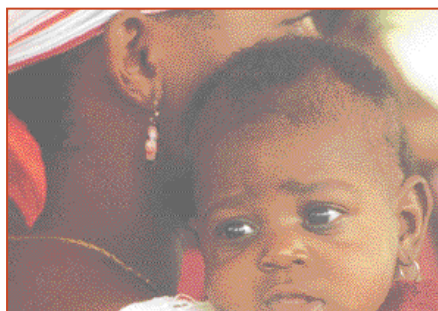
sex work by training young rural women - many of them orphaned by AIDS - how to produce and market tie-dye fabrics and traditional beads. Without such income generating activities, many of these young women would end up migrating to urban cities where the majority become involved in commercial sex work and eventually become infected with HIV, only to return to their villages several years later dying of AIDS.



# 5

## ***Access to care and treatments, and support to networks of PLWHA***

### ***Training of national Focal Points of West and Central African countries in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV***



To intensify country efforts in the implementation of the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV programme, a sub-regional Inter-Agency Working Group (GRIA) was set up in December 2000. One of the recommendations of GRIA was to encourage countries to appoint Focal Points for PMTCT, and ensure their training in order to provide West and Central African countries with competent resource persons for implementation of PMTCT programmes.

A regional training workshop was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 23-27 July 2001, which brought together National MTCT Focal Points from African countries (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Zimbabwe), United Nations agencies, Ivoiran Authorities, the different partners and associations of women living with HIV. The workshop enabled the participants to:

- Exchange experiences acquired through PMTCT programmes implemented in the West and Central African sub-regions;
- Acquire knowledge on the technical aspects of PMTCT as well as achievements and challenges of the implementation of PMTCT programmes;
- Explore different ways of initiating or scaling-up PMTCT programmes;
- Create a network of technical resources on PMTCT in West and Central Africa.



### ***Acceleration of access to care and treatment in ECOWAS member-countries***

In the framework of sub-regional integration for accelerating access to care and support for PLWHA, the West African Health Organization (WAHO) organized, with the support of the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team and WHO, a meeting of Experts from 10 countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo) on 13-14 August 2001 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The objective of the meeting was to identify the following priority areas:

- Voluntary counselling and testing (VCT);
- Geographical and financial accessibility of HIV testing;
- Diagnostic capacities and availability of drugs;
- Nutritional and psycho-social support strategies;
- Community care and support and involvement of people living with HIV.

A plan of action was developed with proposals on therapeutic indications and protocols for ARVs and comprehensive care and treatment in ECOWAS member-countries. The participants also adopted the recommendation to members States for group purchasing of drugs and identification of centres of excellence.

### ***Networks of People Living with HIV/AIDS***

The Inter-Country Team supported the functioning of the two sub-regional Secretariats of the Network of African PLWHA (NAP+) based in Abidjan and Yaounde, in order to better organize its contribution and participation in national and sub-regional efforts under the collaboration agreement between the Inter-Country Team and NAP+.

The establishment of these two Secretariats has helped to enhance and facilitate the exchange of information among national associations. Missions of Ambassadors of Hope were organized to Congo and Mauritania to promote the creation and strengthening of national networks of PLWHA and ensure their effective participation in national strategic plans.

*See annex for further information.*



### ***Direct assistance to countries through UNAIDS Theme Groups***

During the second year of the biennium 2000-2001, the Inter-Country Team intensified its support to all West and Central African countries in order to facilitate a sustainable and enhanced response to the epidemic, particularly in the twelve countries directly monitored by the Inter-Country Team (Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Gabon, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Sierra Leone) in line with the provisions of the "realignment" of the UNAIDS Secretariat.

## **West Africa**

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### **Burkina Faso**

- Technical support for the Donors' Roundtable for funding the multisectoral plan 2001-2005 in the amount of US\$ 94 000 000.

### **Cape verde**

- Support for the strategic planning process, particularly the situation and response analysis.

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

- Technical support for the development of the plan of action 2001-2002 of the Ministry in charge of AIDS attached to the Prime Minister's Office.

### **Gambia (The)**

- Joint mission by the World Bank and the Inter-Country Team with the main objective of working with the Gambian Government on the remaining conditions to be met in order to ensure the credit effectiveness of HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Project (HARRP), the establishment of the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat (NAS), the review of HIV/AIDS-related work among the participating line departments of the State, and the preparation of the launching of the Division AIDS Committees (DAC).

### **Ghana**

- Implementation plan of the PMTCT programme;
- Evaluation of the situation analysis of HIV/AIDS among mobile sex workers.

### **Guinea Bissau**

- Situation analysis of HIV/AIDS and development of a programme of activities, reorganization of the National AIDS Control Programme and functioning of the Theme Group.

### **Guinea Conakry**

- Development of the programme of access to care and antiretrovirals, and support for the implementation of an ongoing PAF for an amount of US\$ 80 000;
- Finalization of the strategic planning process thanks to four technical support missions/country visits;
- Technical support for integration of HIV/AIDS into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP);
- Development of an emergency plan for the utilization of funds of the HIPC Initiative;
- Vast national sensitization and information campaigns on STI/HIV/AIDS developed in 2001 by NGOs as part of the national dialogue on HIV/AIDS initiated by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

## **Liberia**

- Rapid evaluation of the situation of HIV/AIDS in Liberia : the Liberian national response to HIV/AIDS requires considerable support through the Theme Group;
- Technical support to the Theme Group and participation in the workshop for the development of a strategy aimed at social change and behaviour change.

## **Mali**

- Establishment of the Malian Initiative on antiretrovirals;
- Facilitation of the retreat of the Technical Working Group of the Theme Group;
- Development of the strategy for training NGO actors in the framework of the development of the "One circle - one NGO" Initiative;
- Support for the drafting of the special PAF of US\$ 150 000;
- Integration of HIV/AIDS into the PRSP and constitution of a multisectoral monitoring team.

## **Mauritania**

- Formulation of a strategic framework and support for the workshop on multisectoral approach of the response to HIV/AIDS;
- Integration of the HIV/AIDS component into the review of health/poverty expenditures;
- Establishment of a national team to monitor poverty, health and HIV issues in collaboration with the Theme Group;
- Development of an emergency action plan for vulnerable groups at country level.

## **Niger**

- Support for the reduction of vulnerability to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of migration within countries of the Lake Chad Basin;
- Support for the reduction of vulnerability of mobile populations to STI/HIV/AIDS in collaboration with the Theme Group;
- Support for the strategic planning process by the technical resources network in strategic planning;
- Meeting of the Network of Francophone Parliamentarians in September 2001 in Niamey with the support of the Theme Group.

## **Nigeria**

- Situation analysis of HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility in Madiguri State in the framework of the Lake Chad Basin Initiative;
- Development of the PMTCT programme.

## **Senegal**

- Process of integration of HIV/AIDS into the health-nutrition component and advocacy for its cross-cutting integration into other aspects of PRSP;

- Technical support for the review of the national strategic plan and identification of its priority actions for 2002 in collaboration with the Theme Group;
- Support for the institutional analysis of the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) in the perspective of the creation of a National AIDS Commission attached to the Prime Minister's Office.

### ***Sierra Leone***

- Joint mission by the World Bank and the Inter-Country Team for the development of the Sierra Leonean HIV/AIDS Rapid Response Project (SHAARP);
- Support to the Theme Group for finalization of the draft national policy on HIV/AIDS.

### ***Togo***

- Technical support for the strategic planning process, particularly the situation analysis and evaluation of the NACP;
- Support for the development of the national strategic framework and the project on prevention of HIV/AIDS and early pregnancies among young adolescent leaders; definition of mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of the project and organization of the youth forum.

## ***Central Africa***

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### ***Cameroon***

- Development of the strategic framework for implementation of the PMTCT programme;
- Resource mobilization in the framework of the HIPC Initiative and support for the definition of the multi-sectoral planning scenarios.

### ***CAR***

- Involvement of religious leaders through the national workshop of bishops for restitution of the results of the Libreville Conference and development of the plan of action.

### ***Chad***

- Technical support for the establishment of mechanisms for enhancing the multisectoral response in collaboration with the World Bank, the Theme Group and select committees of the ministries concerned;
- Situation analysis of HIV/AIDS in the context of sex work.

### ***Congo-Brazzaville***

- Technical support for analysis of the situation and response to STI/HIV/AIDS in the context of mobility along the Congo, Ubangui and Chari rivers;
- Support for the development of the HIV/AIDS emergency plan of the United Nations system.

### ***Equatorial Guinea***

- Development of the strategic planning framework and the 2001 emergency plan.

### ***Gabon***

- Support for the strategic planning process;
- Support for the programme on access to care and ARVs.

### ***Rwanda***

- Evaluation of the national strategic plan 1998-2001 and organization of the preparation of the strategic plan 2002-2006.

### ***Indian Ocean***

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### ***Madagascar***

- Integration of HIV/AIDS into the PRSP being finalized;
- Establishment of the national team for monitoring the integration of HIV/AIDS into the poverty reduction framework;
- Technical support for the definition of the national resource mobilization strategy.

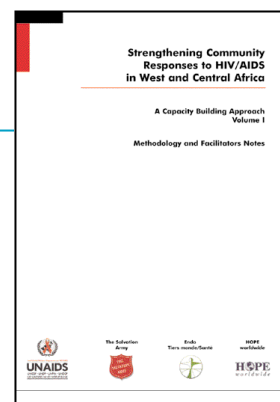


## ■ **Information management and exchange of information and experiences for enhancing national responses**

### **Identification and promotion of best practices for strengthening national strategies**

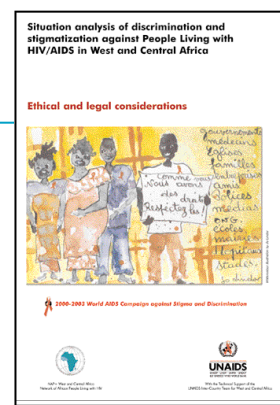
#### ***Strengthening community responses to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa: a capacity building approach***

This case study was the outcome of a collaboration between the Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa, Salvation Army, Enda Santé and Hope Worldwide Côte d'Ivoire highlighting experiences of community approach to capacity building in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal. The French version is scheduled for publication in 2002.



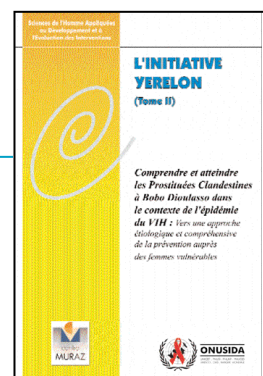
#### ***Situation analysis of discrimination and stigmatization against People Living with HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa: Ethical and legal considerations***

This case study conducted in 6 West and Central African countries, namely Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana and Mauritania, forms part of the process of documentation of experiences in the different countries, with a view to identifying factors promoting or inhibiting the welfare of PLWHA in the communities, understanding the difficulties of involving PLWHA in the prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS, and proposing solutions for the respect of the rights of PLWHA.



#### ***The Yerelon Initiative (II): Understanding and reaching clandestine sex workers in Bobo-Dioulasso in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic: towards an etiological and comprehensive approach to the prevention of HIV/AIDS among vulnerable women***

This study, conducted by the Muraz Centre, Burkina Faso, helped to update the list of hot spots in Bobo-Dioulasso, to describe the life of clandestine sex workers (CS), to identify the process whereby Bobo-Dioulasso girls/women enter into prostitution, to propose a strategy for improving the impact of the Yerelon project on its beneficiaries and ensuring its perpetuation, and to define the best strategies for reaching CS.



## ***Ambulatory Treatment Centres in West and Central Africa***

This case study presented the experiences of ambulatory treatment centres for PLWHA in four countries of West and Central Africa:

- HIV/AIDS Counselling and Care Centre in Bamako, Mali;
- The Yaounde Day Hospital in Cameroon;
- Ambulatory Treatment Centres of Brazzaville and Pointe Noire in Congo;
- The Dakar Ambulatory Treatment Centre in Senegal.

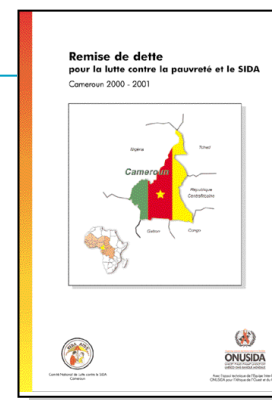


The documentation collected was validated during a workshop held in Dakar, Senegal, from 28-31 January 2001. The workshop offered participants the opportunity to identify the lessons learnt, to analyse the reproducibility of the models and to exchange experiences. The conclusions as well as the factors for perpetuation identified through this analysis, taking into account local realities, would facilitate the multiplication of care and treatment centres adapted to West and Central Africa for the welfare of populations infected by HIV/AIDS. The publication of the case study is scheduled for 2002.

## ***Cameroon's experience of debt relief for poverty reduction and AIDS control***

The case study of debt relief for poverty reduction and AIDS control in Cameroon was initiated by the Inter-Country Team for the period 2000-2001, in collaboration with the UN Theme Group.

The study presents the lessons learnt based on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into the poverty reduction strategic paper and the use of debt relief resources for poverty reduction and AIDS control. It also analysed the weaknesses of the process and made recommendations, which served not only Cameroon, one of the initial beneficiaries of debt relief but also other countries. The publication of the case study is scheduled for 2002.



## ***Electronic Discussion and Information Exchange Forum***

### ***Public network***

#### ***SAFCO (AIDS in West and Central Africa)***

SAFCO was launched on 9 March 2000 with 400 members from various community structures or organizations. Since this is an open network, its platform is managed on a daily basis. As of 15 December 2001, SAFCO had 1 400 members and 350 posted messages including 126 for the year 2001.



## ***Closed technical networks***

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### *Migration WCA: Electronic information exchange network on Migration and HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa*

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Opened on 09 June 2000, this network promotes exchanges among the main actors of the response to HIV/AIDS in the priority areas of migration/mobility/traffic and transport corridor. It has 156 members and has been decentralized to Dakar, where it is managed by the Secretariat of the Network of Technical Resources in migration since November 2001.

### *NACP-WCA, network of National AIDS Control Programmes (NACP) in West and Central Africa*

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In the framework of the intensification of sub-regional collaboration between NACP coordinators and National AIDS Commissions (NAC) of West and Central Africa, this closed network, in operation since 23 June 2000, promotes exchanges among national actors. The network also integrates members of the network of antiretroviral prescribers in West and Central Africa.

### *SPP-WCA, network of technical resources in strategic planning in West and Central Africa*

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This forum is intended for the network of technical resources on strategic planning for a national response to HIV/AIDS. It presently has 81 members. The moderation of SPP-WCA is decentralized to the Pan-African Development Institute (PDI), which ensures the Secretariat in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, since February 2001.

### *Partner-WCA, network of sub-regional partners of the response to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa*

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Created in implementation of the recommendations of the sub-regional coordination meeting organized on 10 May 2000 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, this network fosters the exchange of information and experiences on the response to the epidemic among sub-regional partners. Partner-WCA now has more than 51 members drawn from various organizations.

In 2001, these networks helped to:

- establish a network of functional communication on HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa;
- meet the information needs of sub-regional actors involved in the response;
- support groups of technical resources in specific priority areas (migration, strategic planning);
- strengthen regional capacities in the framework of strategic planning and priority areas;
- facilitate access to national/regional documentary resources and capacity building in the area of management and access to information.



## Web site of the Inter-Country Team

<http://www.onusida-aoc.org>



The UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa manages a bilingual Internet site (English and French) which includes the following sections:

- Declarations and appeals at the global and sub-regional level;
- Regional and global information;
- Electronic exchange networks and technical resources networks;
- Frameworks for collaboration between the Inter-Country Team and various organizations;
- Publications of the Inter-Country Team;
- Mandate and missions of the Inter-Country Team;
- Link to sites of co-sponsoring agencies and other partners.

## 4

***Database - Mailing list and technical resources***

The Inter-Country Team has put in place a "*Mailing List*" database, which is mainly used for distribution of publications and compilation of technical resources. The database currently contains information on 350 institutions and resource persons in West and Central Africa.

## 5

***Development of a sub-regional HIV/AIDS documentation centre***

A documentation centre, which already has 850 titles of monographs, about 205 titles of periodicals focused on the issue of HIV/AIDS, has been set up within the Inter-Country Team to facilitate access to information at sub-regional level. The entire collection of the centre has been computerized using WINISIS software package, and bibliographic searching could be made on the title of the document, descriptors or key words, year of publication, editor or author, etc. Its vocation is to become the UNAIDS reference centre on HIV/AIDS in the sub-region.

## 6

***Media, communication and publications******Inter-country press conference on UNGASS***

In the context of the preparation of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS), a sub-regional video-press conference was organized from Geneva on 7 June 2001 for UNAIDS Theme Groups, NACPs and journalists from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal.

Chaired by the Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS, the video-conference enabled representatives from each country to present the preparations for UNGASS and share their experiences, while journalists asked questions on the various aspects of the Special Session on HIV/AIDS, including the Global Fund, the priority areas and monitoring of the Declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS.

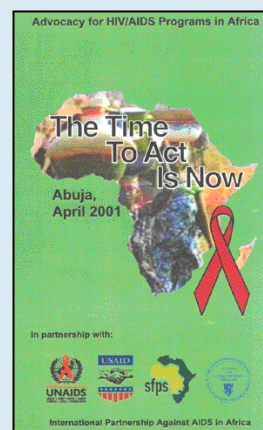
***Compilation and dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS in partnership with the Pan-African News Agency (PANA)***

Press articles from PANA correspondents were compiled and disseminated through the mailing list created for that purpose, while an AIDS Directory was published on the Web sites of the Inter-Country Team and of the PANA in order to facilitate exchange of information between actors and partners, and the general public in Africa and world-wide.

## Communication: production of video films

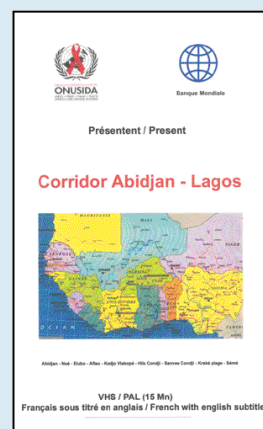
### *It is time to act*

In the context of the African Summit on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and related infectious diseases, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 24-27 April 2001, the Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa, in partnership with SFPS (Santé Familiale et Prévention du SIDA), conceived an advocacy video film entitled "*It is time to act*", which is a summary of statements and interviews of African Heads of State and Government, the UN Secretary-General, representatives of agencies of the United Nations System and other agencies. A discussion guide, as a complement to the video film, was also conceived for the purpose of stimulating in-depth discussion on HIV/AIDS and encouraging individual and collective commitment in the fight against AIDS.



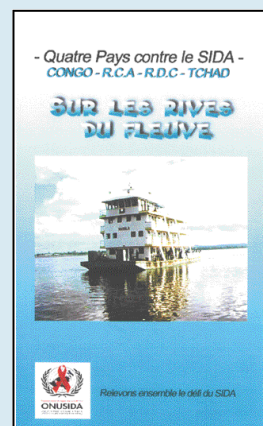
### *Abidjan-Lagos corridor*

The film reviews the issue of migration along the Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor linking Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria. It describes the socio-cultural and physical environment of the eight cross-border sites along the corridor, namely Noe, Elubo, Aflao, Kodjoviakope, Sanvee Condji, Hilla Condji, Krake and Seme, and gives account of the discussions held with the local populations.



### *On the banks of the River - Four countries against AIDS (CAR, Chad, Congo and DR Congo)*

This advocacy video film was produced on the occasion of the launching of the Initiative of riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari on 28 August in Brazzaville, Congo, by Ministers of the four countries concerned and the Executive Director of UNAIDS. It gives account of the pilot health and HIV prevention action along River Congo stretching over a distance of about 120 km.



## Press caravan Senegal's response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic

This documentary film was produced in the context of the press caravan organized by UNDP in partnership with UNAIDS with a view of sharing experiences of Senegal's national response to the AIDS epidemic. The documentary will be available at the beginning of 2002.



## "SAFCO" Quarterly Bulletin

The UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa introduced a quarterly bilingual bulletin "SAFCO" in January 2000, intended to review activities and efforts made in the fight against HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa. The Bulletin comprises the following headings:

- IPAA
- World AIDS campaign;
- Technical papers;
- Activities of co-sponsors and partners;
- Activities of the Inter-Country Team;
- Network of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The last issue of SAFCO for 2001, "Special Issue N°4", published on the occasion of the 12th ICASA in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, was devoted to an analysis of the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS at all levels in order to assist West African countries to better plan and prepare the response.



## ***Publications of the Inter-Country Team in 2001***

***E - English, F - French***

### ***Key documents***

- Analysis of the situation and the response in the Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor - report (E/F)
- Situation analysis of discrimination and stigmatization against people living with HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa - ethical and legal considerations (Provisional report), November 2001 (F)
- Strategic framework for AIDS control in Equatorial Guinea, 2001-2005, July 2001, (E/F)
- Initiative of countries of the Lake Chad Basin on STI/HIV/AIDS - Sub-regional programme for the reduction of vulnerability and risk of STI/HIV/AIDS with regard to mobility in countries of the Lake Chad Basin, May 2001 (E/F)
- Initiative of riverside countries of Congo, Ubangui and Chari - Reduction of vulnerability in the context of mobility and post-conflict situations, August 2001 (F)
- Strengthening of community responses to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa: a capacity building approach. Volume 1 - Methodology and facilitators notes, December 2001 (E)
- Strengthening of community responses to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa: a capacity building approach. Volume 2 - HIV/AIDS and communities. A journey into change: experiences in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal, December 2001 (E)
- Republic of Congo - Emergency plan against AIDS, August 2001 (F)

### ***Reports of Activities***

- A synthesis report of the workshop for the implementation of a joint STI/HIV/AIDS prevention and care programme along the Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor, Cotonu, Benin, 30 July-2 August 2001 (E/F)
- Report of Activities 2000 of the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa, January 2001 (E/F)
- Report of the ILO/GTZ/FHI-SFPS/UNAIDS joint working meeting on HIV/AIDS in the work place, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 28-29 June 2001 (F)
- Final report - Regional workshop on situation analysis of sex work in West and Central Africa, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 21-24 March 2000 (E/F)



## ■ **Sub-regional partnership against AIDS**

### **Sub-regional coordination within the United Nations system**

The meeting of sub-regional representatives of the UN agencies was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 17-18 September, 2001. The meeting, now an annual event, forms part of the continuous process of coordination, harmonization and exchange of information among the UNAIDS Secretariat, co-sponsoring agencies and other agencies. It offered participants the opportunity to agree on the development of an HIV/AIDS strategy for West and Central Africa, and to review the UNGASS declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS and its implication for the sub-region.

In the framework of UNGASS, the Abuja Plan of Action and IPAA, the UN agencies represented at the meeting decided to strengthening their collaboration at the sub-regional level in order to ensure that sub-regional and inter-country support to national programmes makes the most efficient joint use of the scarce technical, human and financial resources.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The raison d'être of regional programmes, inter-country projects and regional technical resource networks is to strengthen and add to the effectiveness of national responses.
2. Sub-regional strategy development processes should involve all partners - African governments, UN agencies, donors, the private and community sectors (the "five pillars" of the IPAA).
3. A sub-regional "mapping" exercise is required to identify existing and planned sub-regional approaches and activities of all partners in West and Central Africa.
4. Existing mechanisms of UN system coordination and collaboration should be retained and strengthened, including (1) the inter-agency working groups around the priority themes identified in the Secretary General's "Call to Action" - namely PMTCT, orphans, access to care and treatment, youth and HIV vaccines (2) sub-regional Theme Group (3) biennial sub-regional coordination meetings of all partners, and (4) development of regional technical resources networks.
5. VCT should be adopted as a priority theme for joint UN system action at sub-regional level in West and Central Africa. UNICEF and UNAIDS Secretariat to develop proposals for coordinated and joint action.
6. Additional themes for joint sub-regional action by the UN system should include - migration/mobility/transport corridor, sex work and trafficking, emergency, conflict and post conflict situations.
7. Information exchange should be enhanced through electronic information networks, web-sites and sub-regional meetings for the systematic dissemination of relevant mission reports, evaluation reports, and workplans.
8. ILO should provide guidance to UN agencies to help them establish programs and services for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and the care and treatment of PLWHA, especially for local UN employees who are not covered by major medical health insurance.

9. UNFPA will continue to take the lead in bulk purchase and distribution of contraceptive commodities and drugs to assure economies of scale, reduced prices and increased accessibility throughout the sub-region.
10. All sub-regional UN agencies should share their workplans 2003-2003 with the Inter-Country Team.
11. Representatives of UN agencies will meet at the 12th ICASA, 9-13 December 2001, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to discuss the revised version of the Inter-Country Team 2002-2003 workplan.
12. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of national activities could become a major theme of sub-regional collaboration.
13. The Inter-Country Team will create and share a database of sub-regional technical resources networks on priority themes adopted by UNGASS.
14. Each sub-regional UN agency should assign a regional HIV/AIDS Focal Point.
15. Efforts should be made to identify, produce and disseminate "*Best Practices*" in order to support countries to go to scale.
16. A second Regional Coordination Meeting with all sub-regional partners will be held in 2002 to reinforce sub-regional mechanisms of collaboration and to identify strategic priorities for joint action.



## **Development of sectoral partnerships**

### **Insurance sector**

Following the advocacy conducted in the insurance sector through the interventions during the 25th General Assembly of the "*Fédération des Sociétés d'Assurance de Droit National Africaines*" (FANAF), held in Dakar from 12-16 February 2001, and during the 28th Conference and General Assembly of the African Insurance Organization (AIO), held in Abidjan, from 27-31 May 2001, a framework agreement was signed with the AIO and UNAIDS. Under the agreement, the two parties agreed to combine their efforts to initiate an adapted response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in business circles in general and the insurance sector in particular.

In the framework of the implementation of the IPAA, the Secretary General of AIO, taking note of the resolution of the 25th General Assembly of FANAF, invited the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa to make a presentation on "*The AIDS Disaster and its Impact on the Insurance Industry in Africa*", one of the main themes of the 28th Conference and General Assembly of AIO, held in Abidjan on 27-31 May 2001 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. At the end of the plenary discussions and the Working Group on "*Life Committee*", the 28th Conference and General Assembly of FANAF acknowledged that:

- HIV/AIDS is a real scourge that is impeding growth, aggravating poverty and annihilating all prospects for Africa's development;
- The spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in many of the countries participating in this meeting is an issue of concern for the entire national community, which should mobilize all its energies and resources to halt the progress of the epidemic and ensure the survival of African populations.



To that end, the AIO and UNAIDS agreed to combine their efforts to initiate an adapted response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the business community, particularly the insurance sector. The two organizations pledged to:

- pursue the reflections and dialogue on involvement of the insurance sector in HIV/AIDS control at the national, sub-regional and regional levels in the framework of an AIO/UNAIDS/ILO tripartite consultation;
- examine the modalities for establishing an HIV/AIDS Solidarity Fund within AIO for promoting AIDS-control actions in certain enterprises and certain countries;
- exchange pertinent experiences, information and data on the HIV/AIDS epidemic and search for appropriate tools for identifying and addressing the concerns of African insurance companies with regard to the impact of the epidemic on their enterprises and their market.

### ***World of work: ILO/GTZ/FHI-SFPS/UNAIDS joint meeting***

A joint working meeting between the ILO, GTZ, FHI-SFPS and UNAIDS was organized from 28-29 June 2001 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on HIV/AIDS in the world of work. The objective was to mutually inform each other of activities carried out by each institution on HIV/AIDS in the world of work and identify possible areas of collaboration between the four partners. A matrix summarizing the tools available, types of interventions and target groups for HIV/AIDS actions in the working environment, and an inventory of country HIV/AIDS initiatives in the private sector were developed at the end of the meeting. The recommendations concerned mainly the creation of a regional coordination group on HIV/AIDS and the world of work.

### ***Water and electricity sectors***

As part of the promotion of HIV/AIDS activities at the workplace, the ILO and UNAIDS, in collaboration with the Union of Producers, Conveyors and Distributors of Electric Energy in Africa and the Union of African Water Suppliers organized a workshop on HIV/AIDS. The meeting, which was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 27-28 November 2001, brought together participants from 12 water and electricity companies of six West African countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal, and Togo. The participation costs were entirely paid by the enterprises.

A draft Plan of Action 2002-2003 was developed and approved by the participants. The draft plan of action could be adjusted and completed by each enterprise, with a schedule adapted to its own situation.

The process and lessons learnt from the organization of such a workshop have been documented in a brief note summarizing the key aspects of advocacy with the private sector in Africa. The following were identified as factors contributing to the active involvement of the private sector: a sectoral approach; prompt involvement of organizations representing the water and electricity sectors; a participatory and innovative funding of the meeting; promotion of best practices of participating enterprises; a balanced representation of enterprises; and a close collaboration with UNAIDS and other partners.

## ***Alliance of African Artists and collaboration with Pierrette Adams***



As part of the social mobilization and sensitization of populations of West and Central Africa on the occasion of the 2001 World AIDS Campaign : *"I care, do you?"* , the Inter-Country Team conceived and produced posters with an African celebrity, Pierrette Adams, a renowned singer throughout Africa.

In the context of the 12th ICASA, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 9-13 December, 2001, the Inter-Country Team in association with the Alliance of African Artists against HIV/AIDS organized sensitization campaigns using audio-visual materials.

## ***Society of Women against AIDS in Africa (SWAA) - West and Central Africa***

With the support of the Inter-Country Team, SWAA organized from 14 - 16 March in Niamey, Niger a workshop for exchange of experiences on PMTCT and promotion of the female condom as a means of protecting women. It was attended by about thirty participants from SWAA branches in West and Central Africa, including Ghana, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria. At the end of the plenary discussions and working groups, the participants agreed on the following:

- The creation of a conducive political and socio-economic environment for the response to HIV/AIDS;
- The urgent establishment of structures to combat female HIV-status and MTCT;
- Greatest involvement of women in the national response to HIV/AIDS.

The Inter-Country Team supported country projects on the promotion of the female condom as a means of protecting women against the epidemic.

## ***Association of Bishops' Conferences of the Central African Region (ACERAC)***

The Association of Bishops' Conferences of the Central African Region (ACERAC) organized a Conference of Central African Bishops on: *"AIDS, a challenge to churches, multisectoral networking and management"* from 2-5 May 2001 in Libreville, Gabon, with technical and financial support from the Inter-Country Team and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The objective was to mobilize the Catholic Church to intensify partnership at the regional level and ensure its involvement in the response to AIDS at country level through a solemn consensus on commitment. The meeting should facilitate the adoption of a sub-regional strategy for strengthening IPAA through the Conference of Central African Bishops at the level of the sub-region and churches in the countries; it should also facilitate the analysis of the strategic orientations and the UNAIDS/CARITAS framework of collaboration.

At the end of the meeting, the Bishops signed a declaration to reaffirm their commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

We, Bishops of Central Africa,

Aware of the devastating effects of AIDS in the world and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, especially at the geographical, economic, socio-cultural and religious levels;

Faithful to our mission towards every man and every woman;

Desirous to live Our Lord's Prayer "*deliver us from evil*" in consultation with priests, religious persons, laymen and laywomen from churches, Family of God of Cameroon, Chad, CAR, Congo-Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Gabon and Senegal, we pledge to firmly commit ourselves to the fight against AIDS;

Reaffirm the message of the Universal Church inviting each person to adopt a responsible sexual behaviour;

Reiterate our solicitude towards people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and confirm our firm desire to fight against all forms of discrimination and marginalization.

To that end, we decide :

- to create a Sub-Regional AIDS Control Coordination Council within the Association of Bishops' Conferences of the Central African Region, chaired by the Archbishop of Libreville;
- to constitute within each Bishops' Conference, National Bishops' AIDS Control Committee, which will work in close collaboration with the National AIDS Control Committee, UNAIDS and all other partners, in the spirit of the IPAA;

Concerning the implementation of this commitment, we decide:

- to recommend to our seminaries to integrate into the training of future priests, information and courses on the AIDS epidemic;
- to develop and implement a sub-regional plan of action and national AIDS control plans;
- to organize with the support of competent institutions and services training sessions and seminars for our community-based religious leaders;
- to mobilize human, material and financial resources to provide an efficient and effective response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- to request the authorities of each country to make AIDS control a national priority and to associate, in the respect of differences, religious faiths to this fight.

### ***Alliance of mayors and municipal officials on HIV/AIDS in Africa***

In response to the dramatic spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa, Mayors and Municipals Officials of the continent created in 1998, an Alliance with a view to promoting multi-sectoral actions at the local level through partnership with the civil society. The Coordination Committee of the Alliance met with an expert working group including UNAIDS, from 2-4 May, 2001 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire as a follow-up of the General Assembly of Africities 2000 in Windhoek, Namibia.

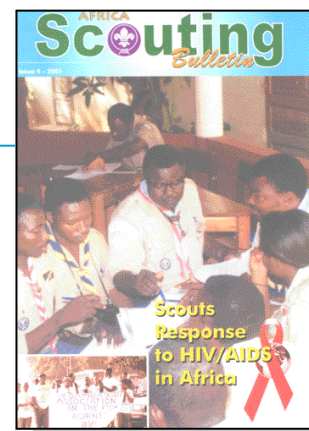
Main decisions:

- Adoption of a new draft constitution;
- Selection of Windhoek in Namibia to host the Headquarters and Secretariat of the Alliance with a sub-regional Liaison Office in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire;
- Creation of an Executive Secretariat in charge of the organization and functioning of the Alliance;
- Adoption of a guide for resource mobilization.

The Committee finally expressed satisfaction at the creation by UNDP and UNAIDS of a programme of support to the Alliance and the AMICAALL Initiative (African Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at Local Level). The programme is based in Geneva.

### ***Africa Regional Office of Scout Movement: sub-regional operational Centre***

The Inter-Country Team and the sub-regional operational Centre of the African Scout Movement in Dakar, Senegal, evaluated the joint sub-regional project on integration of HIV/AIDS into the training course of scouts conducted between 1999 and 2001.



## 3

### ***Strengthening of Partnerships***

**GTZ**



A working meeting between the Inter-Country Team and the African Regional Programme/HIV/AIDS of GTZ was held in Abidjan on 16 February 2001 to review the joint activities carried out, to draw lessons and to make proposals for collaboration between the two teams. These proposals concerned support for the implementation of a decentralized and multi-sectoral response, the exchange of information and documentation and the launching of joint activities during the 12th ICASA in December 2001 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

### ***International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies***



In relation with the enhancement of the consultation and joint operation in West and Central Africa between the Inter-Country Team and Regional Office for West Africa of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the two institutions adopted a framework for sub-regional collaboration on activities related to sex workers, community and local responses and the approach of peer educators, particularly among the youth.

### ***African Development Bank (AfDB)***



A protocol of agreement between the African Development Bank and UNAIDS was finalized in the context of the implementation of the IPAA in accordance with the strategy aimed at supporting countries to integrate HIV/AIDS into their development programmes and strategies.

### ***West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)***



A framework protocol agreement on cooperation with WAEMU was developed to facilitate the provision of assistance, in the area of HIV/AIDS control and related areas, to member-States with a view to improving health conditions and raising health standards in accordance with their objectives.

### ***Africare***



An aide-memoire of collaboration was established with Africare for the strengthening of the capacities of local communities, NGOs, the private sector and governments in the area of prevention, care and treatment of STI/HIV/AIDS.

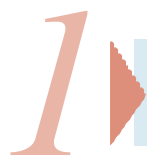
### ***West African Rice Development Association (WARDA)***



In the framework of the IPAA and in the context of the bi-directional relationship between HIV/AIDS and agriculture, a joint working meeting was held with WARDA. On this occasion, it was decided to develop a memorandum of understanding to formalize the collaboration between the two organizations and determine areas for joint action.



## ■ Annexes



### ***UNAIDS/NAP+ collaboration in West and Central Africa, evaluation of 2000-2001 and prospects for 2002-2003***

The UNAIDS Inter-Country Team organized in Douala, Cameroon, from 10-13 August 2000 a Workshop on Revitalization of the Network of African People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAP+) in West Africa to ensure their greater involvement in the response to the epidemic. During the meeting, the Inter-Country Team and NAP+ established a framework for collaboration and developed a joint plan of action.

This framework for collaboration was the outcome of the situation analysis conducted during the workshop:

- A resource mobilization strategy for better synergy and revitalization of NAP+ activities was already acknowledged as a necessity by all partners in the sub-region;
- During the regional coordination meeting held on 10 May 2000 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, NGOs, community-based associations and development partners in the region pledged to support all initiatives likely to enhance the involvement of PLWHA in the response to HIV/AIDS;
- The operational difficulties of networks and associations of PLWHA in the sub-region are mainly associated with lack of funding and weakness of the coordination structures put in place. However, PLWHA have developed an expertise, inter alia, in counselling and psycho-social care and support as well as advocacy for the respect of their rights and the prevention, activities that deserve strong support.

The framework for collaboration is aimed at:

- contributing to the intensification and enhancement of the visibility of NAP+ in West and Central Africa;
- supporting or creating national networks and associations of PLWHA;
- supporting the following priority areas:
  - capacity building and development of income-generating activities;
  - support to advocacy activities;
  - improvement of the exchange of experiences and documentation on "Best Practices";
  - intensification of the coordination between the two NAP+ Secretariats based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Yaounde, Cameroon.

## ***Achievements***

### ***Support to NAP+ Secretariats in West and Central Africa***

- Facilitation of the responses by NAP+ and National Associations of PLWHA with the recruitment of GIPA Programme Officer within the Inter-Country Team;
- Technical support in the development and coordination of plans of action in order to:
  - facilitate the exchange of experiences and information with national networks and associations of PLWHA;
  - support the members in their advocacy activities, particularly in countries of the sub-region where there are no networks and where PLWHA associations are still in an embryonic stage;



- provide financial support for equipping the Secretariats in Abidjan and Yaounde with computer equipment and communication materials.

### Exchange of information and experiences

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Documentation of experiences of Ambulatory Treatment Centres for PLWHA (Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Mali and Senegal) in order to promote the improvement of services offered, thanks to the dissemination of best practices, and to provide information to the beneficiaries.

This case study, under finalisation, is aimed at facilitating the creation of a great number of Centres in order to improve care and support for PLWHA.

Consultation meeting between the Government, Employers' Association and PLWHA in Cameroon: A consultation meeting between the Central Technical Group of the National AIDS Control Committee (CTG/NACC), the Inter-Employers' Group of Cameroon and the Cameroon Network of Associations of PLWHA was organized in collaboration with UNAIDS from 25-26 May 2001 in Douala, Cameroon. The consultation helped to analyse the important role of PLWHA in the place of work and the positive impact of their intervention in the world of work, particularly in the private sector.

Case study on discrimination, stigmatization and the ethical and legal issues in the context of HIV in six countries of the sub-region: PLWHA continue to suffer from acts of direct and subtle rejection, both in the working environment and in the health services or in the context of religious and traditional practices. Intolerable physical and moral incidences of violence are very often observed. NAP+ and the Inter-Country Team conducted a situation analysis of discrimination and stigmatization against PLWHA based on facts observed in six West and Central African countries : Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Mauritania.

The analysis, focusing on the ethical and legal considerations, helped to understand the issue, learn lessons and propose actions for improving the situation of the rights of PLWHA. This case study was validated during a workshop organized in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 9-11 July 2001.

The report of the analysis will serve as reference document for the World AIDS Campaign 2002-2003 devoted to discrimination and stigmatization by highlighting an issue that requires the development of positive initiatives for the respect of the rights of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Support for greater involvement of NAP+ in the organization of the 12th ICASA, 9-12 December in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: NAP+ participated in the meeting of the International Steering Committee of the 12th ICASA and in two preparatory meetings of the community forum:

- from 11-13 April 2001 in Ouagadougou, for the development of the community platform and definition of the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariats of the networks;
- from 13-14 June 2001 in Dakar, Senegal, for the review and budgetization of the retained plan of action.



## *Development of partnerships*

### Rights of PLWHA and national laws

- Francophone African Parliamentarians were sensitized on the fight against HIV/AIDS and the need to adapt national legal texts to ensure the protection of human rights. These issues featured on the agenda of two workshops on health and reproduction, HIV/AIDS and ethical and legal issues in September 2001 in N'Djamena, Chad, and in October 2001 in Niamey, Niger;
- With the Inter-African Union of Human Rights, a workplan would facilitate the implementation in 2002 of a legal framework for the defence of PLWHA and for the collection and dissemination of information on the situation of discrimination and stigmatization in West and Central Africa. This new legal mechanism would give the fight against discrimination both a formal and legal dimension, which would necessarily accelerate the change of mentalities and behaviours in the face of HIV/AIDS.

### Contribution of NAP+ to sub-regional meetings and workshops

- Meeting (USAID/SFPS) on the functioning of toll-free telephone lines in the prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in February 2001. The experiences of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo showed the importance of this approach in the listening and counselling of affected population groups, activities that should be intensified and extended;
- Workshop on preparation of a Guide on the development of messages on STI/HIV/AIDS organized by SFPS/UNAIDS/NAP+ in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 23-27 January 2001. This message guide is intended for government actors and organizations of the civil society actively involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and aimed at enhancing the impact of messages targeting behaviour change;
- Technical consultation of the programme "*Secure the Future*" of the Bristol-Myers-Squibb Foundation on the definition and adoption of a governance mechanism and criteria for selecting projects in four West African countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali) held from 14-15 June 2001 in Dakar, Senegal. This initiative is aimed at supporting and strengthening government programmes and activities of community organizations in the fight against HIV/AIDS;
- Regional workshop on "*Media and Child's Rights*" organized by UNICEF from 2-5 April in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire. During this workshop, a presentation was made on the rights of PLWHA and the issue of discrimination and stigmatization in West and Central Africa;
- Meeting on accelerating care and support for PLWHA, organized by the West African Health Organization (WAHO) in collaboration with UNAIDS, WHO and NAP+ from 13-14 August 2001 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

## *Capacity building*

### Training in strategic planning and management of community projects

- In collaboration with NAP+, the Inter-Country Team organized, in the context of the mid-term review of the 2001-2002 strategic plan of NAP+, a capacity building workshop for officials of NGOs and community associations involved in AIDS control in West and North Africa, in Lome, Togo, from 15-20 October 2000. The areas retained were planning, project development and management, resource mobilization, institutional development and partnership through networking;
- Technical support for the 7th meeting of the Africa Network 2000 constituted by 15 African associations of support to PLWHA, with the collaboration of AIDES Paris. The family approach in care and support for PLWHA and the issue of discrimination and stigmatization in West and Central Africa was at the centre of a workshop organized in Lome, Togo, from 24-28 September 2001.

Strategic Planning workshop: Facilitation of the participation of members of NAP+ Secretariats in West and Central Africa in the Workshop on Strategic Planning of the Africa coordination in Nairobi, Kenya, from 5-8 February 2001. The strategic plan, defined on the basis of sub-regional plans of NAP+, was targeted at the following priority areas:

- Improvement of exchange of experiences and dissemination of information;
- Advocacy for acceleration of access to treatments and care and support for infected and affected children;
- Intensification of prevention actions for behaviour change;
- Promotion of voluntary counselling and testing;
- Strengthening the capacity of associations at national and regional level.

Training workshops for strengthening the capacities of Cameroonian associations of PLWHA: In collaboration and with the technical support of GTZ and NACP/Cameroon, NAP+ organized a training cycle in 2001:

- Workshop on management of an association of PLWHA, 24-27 April in Bamemba, Cameroon;
- Training workshop for PLWHA on management of associations of PLWHA, 23-27 September 2001 in Ngaoundere, Cameroon;
- Workshop on methodological consolidation and training of trainers, 3-8 December 2001 in Mbalmayo, Cameroon.

## Advocacy

### Missions of NAP+ Ambassadors of Hope

- Mission of Ambassadors of Hope to Mauritania, to support the creation of the first association of PLWHA of this country and in Niger;
- Mission of support to an association of PLWHA in Congo-Brazzaville. These missions of Ambassadors of Hope of NAP+ have brought hope to PLWHA and their families, and contributed to enhance the visibility and promoted greater involvement of PLWHA in national responses to HIV/AIDS. The missions of hope sensitize political, religious and traditional leaders to promote the positive impact of early voluntary testing, and facilitate the creation of associations and development of networks of PLWHA by intensifying the sharing of experiences;
- New national networks of PLWHA were created in 2001 in four countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali and Togo.



*Mission of Ambassadors of Hope of NAP+ with the First Lady of Niger (in yellow)*

### Advocacy with African Civil Society

- Conference on the socio-cultural and political dimensions of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cotonou, Benin, from 9-10 October 2000. Advocacy before artists, writers, African leaders to ensure greater involvement of PLWHA in a context of no discrimination and stigmatization;
- Traditional Chiefs AIDS day, 15-21 July 2001, in Garoua, Cameroon.

With journalists/correspondents of the Pan-African News Agency (PANA)

- Discussions on the role of journalists on issues related to discrimination and stigmatisation as well as on the rights and obligations of PLWHA in Dakar, Senegal, 12 December 2000.

Workplace and HIH/AIDS

- Integration of issues related to discrimination and stigmatization against PLWHA in the workplace during a consultation meeting of ILO/GTZ/FHI-SFPS/UNAIDS on HIV/AIDS and the workplace held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 28-29 June 2001;
- Involvement of PLWHA in care and prevention programmes initiated by electricity and water companies of francophone West African countries following a planning workshop on HIV/AIDS and the workplace in electricity and water companies of six West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo) held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 27-28 November 2001.

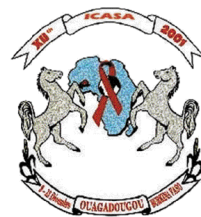
***Building on past achievements and constraints***

During the biennium 2002-2003, collaboration between NAP+ and UNAIDS in West and Central Africa will concentrate on the following areas, which will be the subject of discussions on strategies of implementation with NAP+:

- Advocacy through the organization of missions of Ambassadors of Hope of NAP+, which constitute the major advocacy activity for the network;
- Intensifying the participation of NAP+ in the promotion of voluntary counselling and testing;
- Development of partnerships : The spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region has given rise to multiple more or less structured initiatives at community and institutional level. This mobilization has contributed significantly to the search for an adapted response to the epidemic. Maintaining this dynamism calls for the strengthening and development of new partnerships for implementation and the enhanced multisectoral responses;
- The intensification of exchanges for improving the sharing of information and experiences among associations, between associations and development partners, between associations and governments.



## **The UNAIDS Inter-Country Team at the XIIth ICASA, 7-9 December, 2001 - Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso**



### ***Roundtable on migration and mobility associated with HIV/AIDS***

A roundtable on mobility and migration associated with HIV/AIDS organized by the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa, and chaired by the International Organization of Migration (IOM), enabled participants to exchange experiences on migration routes in West and Central Africa, more specifically the *"Abidjan-Lagos migration corridor"* and the case study of the situation of countries in conflict (SWAA, Burundi). At the end of the comments and discussions on the presentations as well as concrete examples of approaches in the context of mobility, a consensus was reached and the following recommendations were made:

- Enhancing analyses of situations, contexts of risks and vulnerability of mobile populations and further improving knowledge;
- Continuing to increase intercountry initiatives;
- Pursuing exchange of information and practical experiences: FHI (care), project on Prevention of AIDS on Migration Routes of West Africa - PSAMAO (CCC materials), the *"Abidjan - Lagos migration"* project (advocacy and planning), IOM (advocacy), Canada "SIDA III" (STI in workplace), SWAA Burundi (women);
- Intensifying collaboration and partnership by promoting better circulation of information;
- Capacity building and development of technical resources network (TRN) on mobility and migration;
- Documenting practical experiences in collaboration with the IOM;
- Preparing advocacy on interventions in the framework of mobility and migration associated with HIV/AIDS for future meetings, particularly the 14th International Conference on AIDS, 7-12 July 2002, Barcelona, Spain.

### ***Roundtable on strategic planning: lessons learnt***

The objectives of the roundtable organized by the UNAIDS Secretariat through the Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa and the West African Strategic Planning Network were as follows:

- place and role of strategic planning in the fight against HIV/AIDS;
- ongoing country experiences;
- demographic projections in relation to HIV/AIDS.

About two hundred people participated in this roundtable, which was animated by representatives from Benin, Burkina Faso, African Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and UNAIDS.

At the end of the presentations and discussions, the following observations were made:

1. If most countries have finalized their strategic plans, the same cannot be said of the sectoral plans;
2. Plans evaluated and budgetized in detail are lacking in a good number of countries;

3. Strategic planning should serve as a tool for developing sectoral plans;
4. The weakness of some institutional frameworks impeded the development of sectoral plans;
5. The socio-political (conflict and post-conflict) situations did not facilitate the strategic planning process in some countries.

### Recommendations :

- Capacity building at the national and regional levels;
- Advocacy for increasing State budgets for pursuing the development and implementation of sectoral plans;
- Moving from strategic planning to the rapid implementation of operational plans;
- The inter-agency teams (UNFPA, Future Group, UNAIDS Secretariat, ...) should harmonize the modelling approaches, particularly the demographic projection models on HIV/AIDS;
- Using resources of the diaspora in the framework of resource mobilization in the countries;
- Intensifying exchange of information and experiences between the two Inter-Country Teams based in Africa (networks of technical and electronic resources);
- Enhancing national ownership of integration of HIV/AIDS into poverty reduction strategy papers and debt alleviation agreements.

### Roundtable on discrimination and stigmatization against PLWHA in Africa

The UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for West and Central Africa organized a roundtable on discrimination and stigmatization against PLWHA in Africa in collaboration with the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for East and Southern Africa. The objectives of the roundtable were :

- To present the situation analysis of discrimination and stigmatization against PLWHA in Africa;
- To conduct advocacy for actions against discrimination and stigmatization in the context of HIV/AIDS.

The roundtable, chaired by Mr. Stephen Lewis, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for AIDS in Africa, was attended by more than 50 participants representing NGOs, PLWHA, women, the youth and the United Nations system, as well as National HIV/AIDS Control Programmes.

The situation analysis was conducted in six countries, namely Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana and Mauritania, and validated by Focal Points of the African Network of PLWHA of the sub-region. After the comments and highly enriching discussions, the participants made the following recommendations:

- Need for advocacy at the national, regional and international levels, in favour of actions against discrimination and stigmatization, with the involvement of African Parliamentarians and leaders of civil society organizations;
- Establishment of centres for providing counselling and social and legal support to PLWHA;
- Wide dissemination of the situation analysis on discrimination and stigmatization conducted in West and Central Africa, and documentation of experiences of the contribution of PLWHA in the response to the epidemic;
- Greater involvement of PLWHA in local, national and international programmes and initiatives.



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

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